

2012 Annual Report



Imagine

Working for Kentucky's Future ... Our Children





CFCRB volunteers have lasting impact on lives of Kentucky children in out-of-home care

John D. Minton Jr.
Chief Justice of Kentucky

Kentucky law requires Citizen Foster Care Review Boards to regularly review the case of every child in the custody of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services due to dependency, neglect and abuse.

During the past year, 753 CFCRB volunteers fulfilled that important responsibility by conducting 19,583 reviews of 9,867 children in out-of-home care. The Department of Family and Juvenile Services of the Administrative Office of the Courts provides support and resources to the CFCRB program.

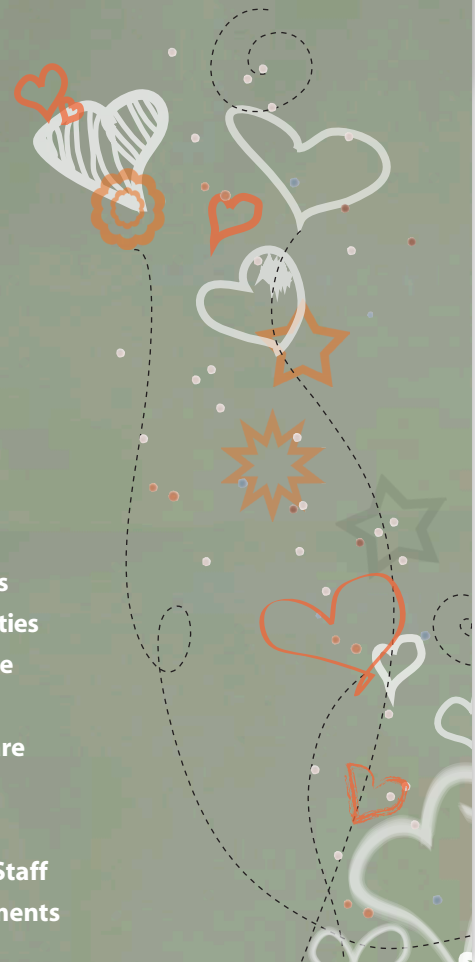
The 2012 CFCRB Annual Report offers a comprehensive analysis of the Kentucky foster care system. You

will find that the system continues to build on its solid foundation by seeking out new partnerships, adopting new technology and expanding successful initiatives. These improvements are designed to place at-risk children in safe, permanent homes as quickly as possible.

Thousands of Kentucky children depend on CFCRB volunteers to advocate on their behalf. I appreciate the dedicated men and women who care enough to invest time in our children's future.

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Progress Report on Kentucky Children in Foster Care

Patrick Yewell, Executive Officer
Department of Family and Juvenile Services, Administrative Office of the Courts

CFCRB Executive Summary for Fiscal Year 2012: July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012

Kentucky Citizen Foster Care Review Board volunteers provide a direct service to judges statewide by monitoring children placed in out-of-home care and providing findings and recommendations to the court on every child reviewed by the local boards.

In addition, CFCRB volunteers submit legislative recommendations in an effort to improve services for children while they are in out-of-home care. The volunteers also work to attain permanency for these children in a timely manner.

I have seen firsthand how tirelessly the CFCRB volunteers advocate for children in out-of-home care. I am proud to present this annual report, which offers a detailed analysis of the children served by the CFCRB. This report also looks at the activities of the 142 review boards and the support services provided by the Department of Family and Juvenile Services of the Administrative Office of the Courts.

Here are several significant findings from FY 2012:

- ≈ 753 CFCRB volunteers conducted 17,073 paper reviews and 2,510 interested party reviews for a total of 19,583 reviews of 9,867 children.
- ≈ The average length of stay for children in care was 18.9 months, a decrease over the 20.2 months reported in FY 2011.
- ≈ Forty-one percent of the children reviewed by the CFCRB were released through reunification to parents or primary caregivers in FY 2012. Another 27 percent of the children were released through placement with relatives, a 3 percent increase over FY 2011.
- ≈ The percentage of children aging out of care has decreased slightly. Twelve percent of youth aged out in FY 2012 compared with 14 percent in FY 2011.
- ≈ Of the children reviewed, those ages 5 and younger were the largest age group (34 percent) and those ages 16 to 20 were the next largest age group (24 percent).

- ≈ Children experienced an average of 2.7 placements per commitment, a slight decrease from the 3 placements per commitment in FY 2011.
- ≈ Slightly fewer children achieved adoption, with 18 percent exiting from care due to a finalized adoption compared with 20 percent in FY 2011. However, children who exited from care due to a finalized adoption spent less time in care – 34.9 months in FY 2012 compared with 36.6 months in FY 2011.
- ≈ CFCRB volunteers conducted 2,510 interested party reviews in FY 2012, a 19 percent increase over FY 2011.
- ≈ The interested party reviews focused on 1,868 children, a 15 percent increase in children over FY 2011.
- ≈ The number of boards using interested party review as the standard grew to 29 percent in FY 2012, compared with 24 percent in FY 2011 and only 1.4 percent in FY 2008.

In FY 2012, CFCRB volunteers held a recordbreaking 1,498 meetings. The increase was due to more interested party reviews and the addition of reviews for committed status offenders. In FY 2012, the CFCRBs began reviewing committed status offenders on a statewide level. Kenton, Fayette and Jefferson, the counties with the highest number of committed status offenders, created Status Interested Party Review Boards to meet this need.

CFCRB volunteers completed continuing education at 37 trainings offered throughout the state. Volunteers could also attend the one-day program titled Legal Trainings for Dependency, Neglect and Abuse Cases.

I commend the CFCRB volunteers for their devotion to children in out-of-home care. Every day hundreds of volunteers provide a voice to the children who need it most. Their work is critical to helping Kentucky children achieve safe, permanent homes.

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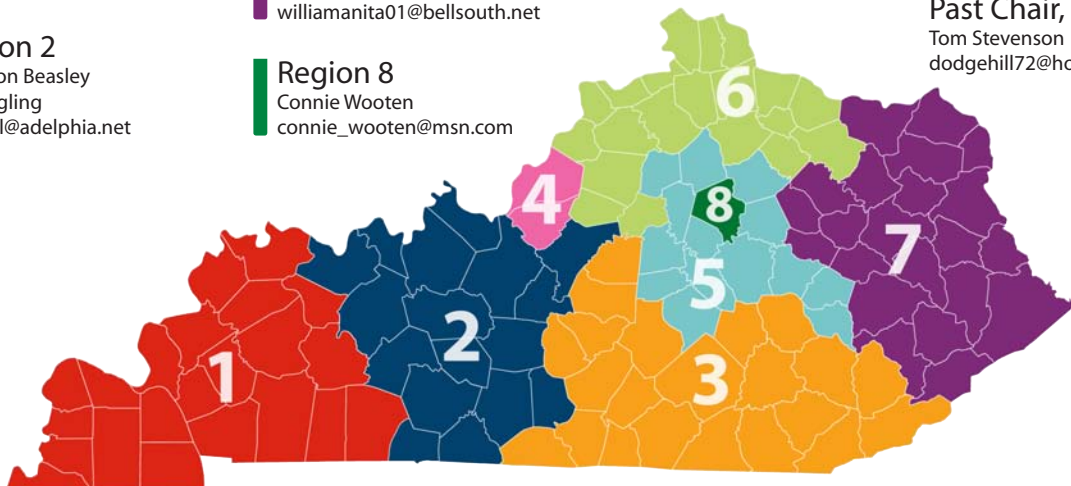
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CFCRB Mission

To ensure safe, permanent, timely placement of Kentucky's children in out-of-home care.

CFCRB Vision

- » With respect to children in care: To ensure adequate and necessary services are provided to families and children with the utmost importance given to safety, well-being and permanency.
- » With respect to the judges we serve: To provide timely, accurate and sufficiently detailed information about children in care so as to promote knowledgeable permanency decisions.
- » With respect to CFCRB volunteers: To promote awareness and understanding regarding children's issues through educational opportunities at local, regional and state levels.
- » With respect to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services: To provide meaningful, respectful feedback regarding paths to permanency.

Kentucky Citizen Foster Care Review Boards 2012 Recommendations for Legislative and Policy Reform

Kentucky Revised Statute 620.320(5) requires the Kentucky Citizen Foster Care Review Boards to evaluate and make annual recommendations to the Supreme Court of Kentucky, the governor and the Legislative Research Commission regarding the laws of the commonwealth and the practices, policies and procedures within the commonwealth that affect permanence for children in out-of-home placement.

Meet the educational needs of children.

- ✎ Amend KRS 620.250(1) to require that the most recent educational record of the child be supplied by the Cabinet for Health and Family Services and obtained by the Cabinet via any electronic portal or system maintained by the Kentucky Education Cabinet. This information could include, but not be limited to, the child's grades, absences, homework, suspension, expulsion, detention or other disciplinary measures taken by the school, as well as any individual education plan relating to the child. This would also include that all youth would have access to their educational record at age 18 (eighteen), as many youth exiting from the Cabinet's custody at this age do not have parents who can access this information. These youth need this information for workforce readiness programs.

Support the statewide expansion of Family Court.

- ✎ While the Kentucky Citizen Foster Care Review Boards recognize that the current economic downturn directly impacts the state budget, the CFCRB would like to encourage the chief justice of Kentucky, the governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the Kentucky General Assembly to make the expansion of Family Court into all 120 Kentucky counties a high priority as funds become available.



Questions & Answers

Out-of-Home Care Demographics

What are the ages of children in foster care?

In FY 2012, the youngest child reviewed by CFCRB volunteers was 2.4 months old and the oldest was 24 years old (due to extended commitment). The average age was 10. Children age 5 and younger were the largest age group (34 percent) to be reviewed. Children between the ages of 16 to 20 were the next largest age group (24 percent) to be reviewed.

The age analysis is based on children who were in out-of-home care on June 30, 2012, and includes children who were released from the Cabinet's custody any time during the fiscal year.

What gender are children in out-of-home care?

The gender of children in out-of-home care is almost evenly split, with 51 percent male and 49 percent female.

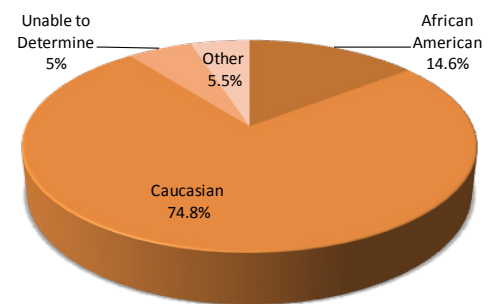
What race are children in foster care?

Of the children in foster care, 75 percent are Caucasian, 15 percent are African-American, 5 percent are unable to be determined and the remaining 5 percent are other races. The other races include American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander.

Children by Age

By Age	Number of Children
0-5 Years	3,392
6-10 Years	1,983
11-15 Years	2,050
16-20 Years	2,334
21 Years & Older	108
Total	9,867

Children by Race





Time in Out-of-Home Care

What is the average length of stay by age group for children in out-of home care?

Active children – children who were still in care at the end of FY 2012 – experienced an average length of stay of 21.3 months. Inactive children – children released at any time during the fiscal year – experienced an average stay of 16 months. The overall average length of stay for FY 2012 was 18.9 months, which represents a slight decrease from the average length of stay of 20.2 months reported for FY 2011.

The chart illustrates the average length of stay for children by age. Children over age 15 continue to remain in care longer than younger children and are experiencing an overall average of 28.6 months in care, compared with 13.4 months in care for children age 5 and younger.

Note: Statistics captured in this chart represent all children whose cases were reviewed between July 1, 2011, and June 30, 2012. The term “active children” describes those whose cases were reviewed during the fiscal year and who were still in care on June 30, 2012. “Inactive children” describes those whose cases were reviewed during the fiscal year but were released prior to June 30, 2012.

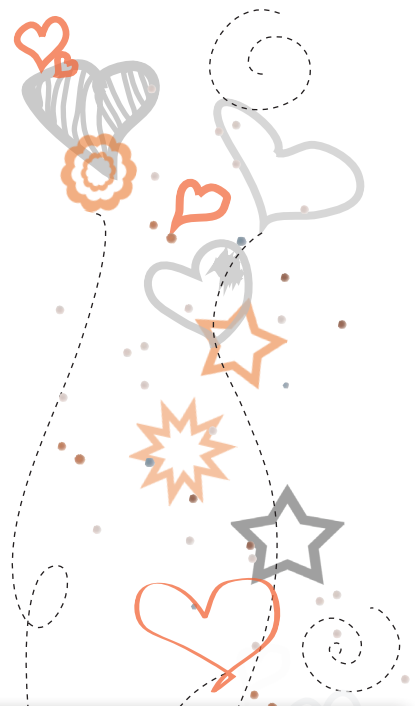
It should be noted that in calculating the average length of stay, children who were in care less than 24 hours are counted as “zero” on the spectrum of length of time in care. These are children who may have been in the process of being removed from the home when a suitable relative assumed custody of the child. When taking into account these zeros, it may actually skew the average to the lower end of the spectrum.

Average Length of Stay in Months as of 6/30/2012



Average Length of Stay in Months as of 6/30/2012

Age in Years	Active	Inactive	All Children
0-5 Years	15.3	11.6	13.4
6-10 Years	18.2	14.1	16.3
11-15 Years	21.2	13.1	18.0
Over 15 Years	30.4	26.5	28.6
Overall	21.3	16.0	18.9



Exiting Out-of-Home Care

Why are children released from out-of-home care?

The majority of children – 41 percent – were released from care through reunification with parents or primary guardians. This is consistent with the 40 percent reported for FY 2011. The next largest group of children exiting care – 27 percent – was through placement with relatives. This is a slight increase from the 24 percent reported for FY 2011.

You will also notice on the chart that three children reviewed in FY 2012 died during the review period. These three children died from ongoing medical conditions and not as a result of maltreatment.

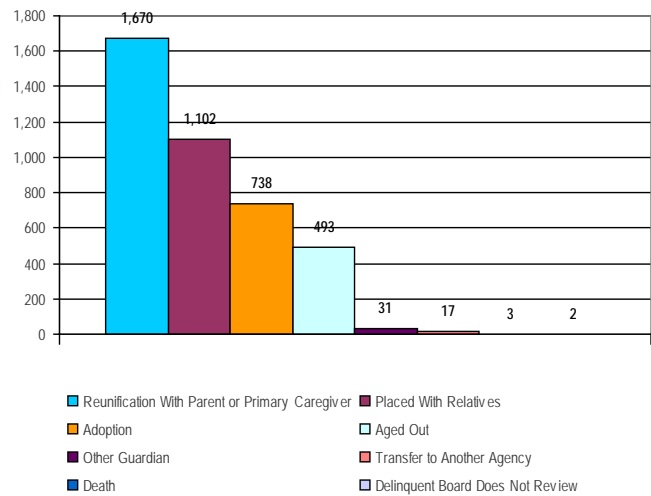
What percentage of children in out-of-home care were adopted?

Eighteen percent of the children released from out-of-home care achieved permanency through adoption in FY 2012. Children who exited care because of a finalized adoption spent 34.9 months in care prior to adoption. Although the percentage of children achieving adoption decreased slightly over FY 2011, the months in care before achieving a finalized adoption also decreased from 36.2 in FY 2011 to 34.9 in FY 2012.

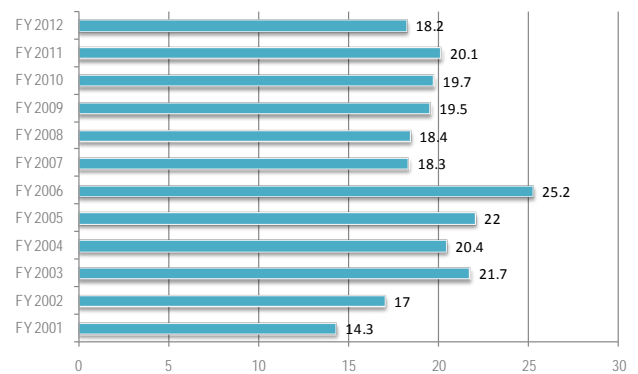
These two charts show the percentage of adoptions and average number of months to finalized adoptions.

Note: The variance in the statistical comparison between FY 2005 and FY 2006 may be due to the implementation of the Children's Automated Tracking System. In FY 2005, the reasons for release were gathered from individual CFCRB case reviews. Since CATS was launched in 2006, release information has been obtained primarily through downloads from TWIST, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services' data-tracking system.

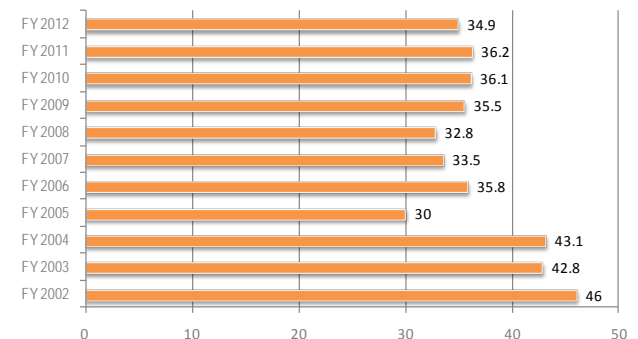
How Children Exited Care



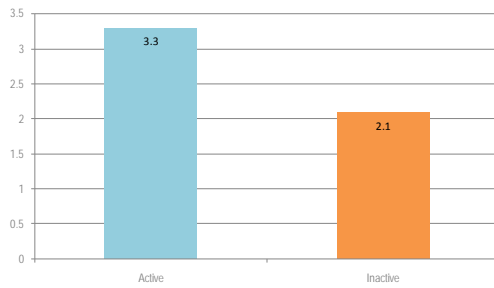
Percent of Adoption by Fiscal Year



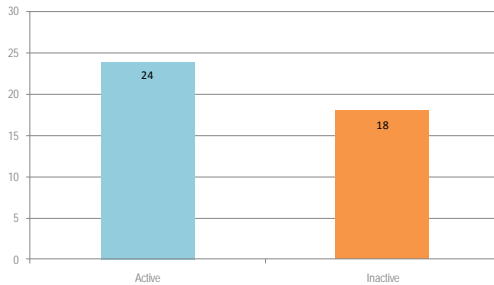
Average Months to Finalized Adoption by Fiscal Year



Average Placements



Interstate Placements



Placement Stability

What do fewer out-of-home placements mean for children in foster care?

Fewer placements create stability and lessen the trauma for children in care. Children experienced an average of 2.7 placements per commitment in FY 2012. The average number of placements is an improvement over the last two fiscal years, with 3 placements per commitment in FY 2011 and 3.2 placements per commitment in FY 2010. This number is also closer to the federal expectation of two placements for a child in out-of-home care.

In addition, the number of placements per commitment for children still active as of June 30, 2012, has continued to decrease. There were 3.3 placements per commitment for active children in FY 2012, compared with 3.5 placements per commitment for active children in FY 2011 and 3.8 placements per commitment for active children in FY 2010. The number of placements per commitment for children who were released from care decreased slightly over the prior fiscal year, with 2.1 placements per commitment for FY 2012 compared with 2.5 placements per commitment for both FY 2011 and FY 2010.

When determining placement for a child, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services considers the least restrictive and most appropriate placement. The CHFS may change the placement of a child for a variety of reasons, such as safety concerns or the need for more intensive services.

How many of these placements were out of state?

In FY 2012, 42 children were placed out of state. Twenty-four of those children were still active as of June 30, 2012. Children are often placed out of state when the Cabinet for Health and Family Services locates a relative living outside of Kentucky who is willing to accept the child for placement. Out-of-state placements are approved through the Interstate Compact process.



Establishing Permanency Goals

How is the permanency goal established and defined?

The Cabinet for Health and Family Services establishes a permanency plan for each child who enters foster care and his or her family. The plan is filed with the court and addresses the reason the child is in custody. The plan focuses on achieving objectives and completing tasks to ensure the child obtains a permanent home as quickly as possible.

The chart defines permanency goals that have been established for children. Return to parent and adoption remain the permanency goals for the majority of children reviewed by the CFCRB.

Children who remain in the custody of the Cabinet for 12 months after initial placement are scheduled for a permanency hearing through the local court to determine their future status. At this hearing, the court addresses whether the child should be returned to the parents, placed for adoption, placed with a permanent custodian or provided with another type of permanent living arrangement.

CFCRB Overview

What is the Citizen Foster Care Review Board?

The Kentucky General Assembly created the Citizen Foster Care Review Board in 1982 in response to federal legislation aimed at decreasing the amount of time children spend in foster care. Today 753 volunteers serve on 142 review boards throughout Kentucky.

CFCRB volunteers are appointed by their chief Family Court or District Court judge to review the cases of children placed in the custody of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services due to dependency, neglect or abuse.

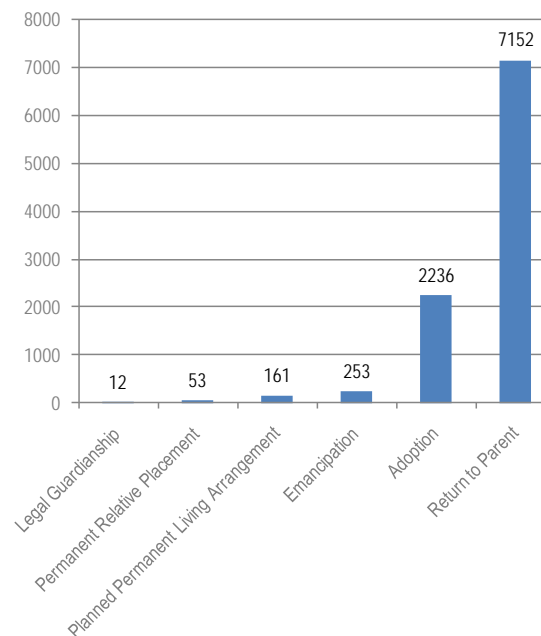
Volunteers regularly review each child's case with a particular focus on the out-of-home placement and the permanency plan established by the Cabinet. Based on information obtained from the reviews, the volunteer makes recommendations to the judge to ensure the child is placed in a safe and permanent home in a timely manner.

In FY 2012, the volunteers held 1,498 meetings and conducted 19,583 reviews on 9,867 children in out-of-home care.

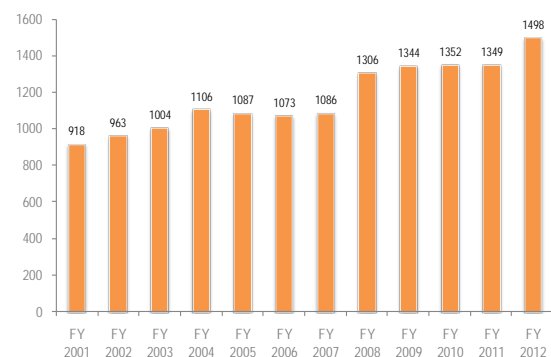
The CFCRB operates within the Department of Family and Juvenile Services of the Administrative Office of the Courts in Frankfort. The AOC is the operational arm of the Kentucky Judicial Branch.



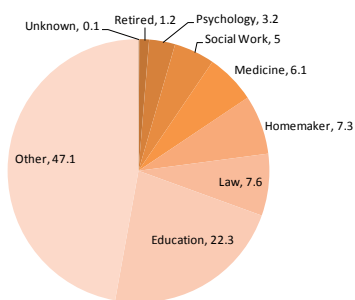
Permanency Goals of Children in Foster Care



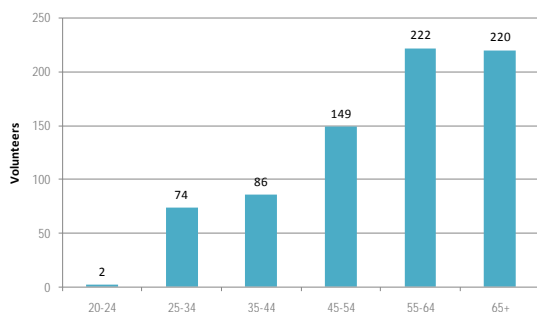
Board Meetings by Fiscal Year



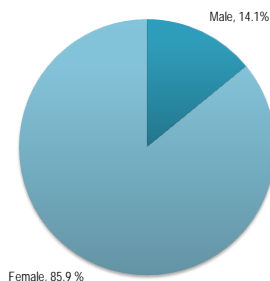
Volunteers by Profession



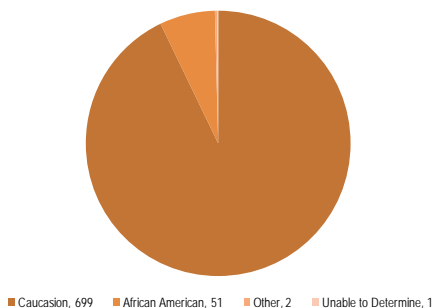
Volunteers by Age Group



Volunteers by Gender



Volunteers by Race



Who are CFCRB volunteers?

CFCRB volunteers share their knowledge and expertise as tireless advocates for the dependent, neglected and abused children in their communities.

Although volunteers vary in age and experience, they share a common commitment to the welfare of Kentucky's children. Of the 753 volunteers in FY 2012, 86 percent were female and 44 percent had backgrounds in education, medicine, law, social work and psychology. The volunteers ranged in age from 23 to 85, with an average age of 56. The average length of service is six years, which demonstrates their long-term dedication to the CFCRB program.

What are the requirements for becoming a CFCRB volunteer?

Those interested in volunteering must complete an initial six-hour training session and consent to a criminal record and Cabinet for Health and Family Services Central Registry Check. New volunteers are trained on the following topics:

- ▶ Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services procedures
- ▶ Local Department for Community Based Services procedures
- ▶ Dependency, neglect and abuse case forms
- ▶ Court processes
- ▶ Mental health needs of children in out-of-home care
- ▶ Process for conducting a review

Once a volunteer has completed the background checks and training, a recommendation is made to the chief judge of the local Family Court or District Court for the volunteer to be appointed to the local board. Judges appoint volunteers for three-year terms. Volunteers are given a comprehensive handbook on the program and opportunities to earn the required six hours of annual continuing education.

What cases do CFCRB volunteers review?

Pursuant to KRS 620.270, CFCRB volunteers review the case of each child who is placed into the custody of the Cabinet by a court order for temporary custody or commitment. The reviews are conducted in the county or counties served by the local CFCRB board.

The cases include those of youth whose commitments have been extended, children placed for adoptions that have not been finalized, children who have been returned home but remain committed and young adults whose out-of-home commitments have been extended. Children and young adults are also subject to review if they were originally committed as dependent, neglected or abused but have been recommitted as status or public offenders, provided the commitment was not interrupted.

What resources are needed to conduct a review?

The CFCRB reviews the case of each child or young adult who is in temporary custody or is committed by the court in the county or counties served by the board. The reviews are conducted through the paper case file or an interactive meeting called an interested party review.

Each review board has access to all pertinent information and records maintained by the Cabinet on the parents or person exercising custodial control or supervision for the child being reviewed. The board also has access to all pertinent information and records of the court, the Cabinet, and public and private child-care facilities for the child the CFCRB is reviewing. Information and records include, but are not limited to, case permanency plans, case progress reports and case records.

Each local board may request in writing, with a notice of five work days, for the employees of the Cabinet and other agencies to appear at local board meetings.

How often are reviews conducted?

According to statute, every child must be reviewed at least once every six months. But CFCRB volunteers may review cases more often if deemed necessary by the board. The CFCRB reports its findings to the court and to the Cabinet.

Where are reviews conducted?

Reviews are conducted in every county in Kentucky. Larger counties may have multiple boards. Smaller counties in the same judicial circuit or district may join together for a combined board.

The chief Family Court or District Court judge designates where the review will take place. Paper reviews are often conducted at the local office of the Department for Community Based Services. Many of the interested party reviews are conducted in local judicial centers.

Where are CFCRB reviews conducted if a child moves to another county?

Pursuant to KRS 620.270(1), if a child moves to another county due to a pre-adoptive placement or if the Cabinet has moved the child, the responsibility for reviewing cases remains with the local review board that serves the county where the child or young adult is in temporary custody or is committed by the court.

When does the CFCRB stop conducting reviews?

Pursuant to KRS 620.270, reviews by a CFCRB shall cease when the child is no longer in the custody of the Cabinet or an adoption has been finalized. The case record will document the release.

CFCRB Activity by IPR Review Board for Fiscal Year 2012

	IPR Reviews	Children Reviewed
Adair	23	17
Allen	61	43
Barren River	55	55
Bath/Menifee	1	1
Big Sandy	23	23
Bluegrass Rural	55	55
Breathitt	1	1
Bullitt B	27	26
Caldwell/Lyon	31	21
Casey	15	12
Christian	91	55
Clinton	22	12
Crittenden	12	8
Cumberland Valley	55	52
Daviess A	108	67
Elliott/Morgan	28	20
Fayette	62	53
Fayette Status IPR	17	17
FIVCO	47	46
Floyd	41	37
Fulton/Hickman	38	20
Garrard	4	4
Gateway/Buffalo Trace	50	49
Green	19	14
Jackson	1	1
Jefferson	74	70
Jefferson 5	91	64
Jefferson 7	99	62
Jefferson Status IPR	2	2
Johnson	81	64
Kenton Status IPR	27	26
Kentucky River	57	57
Kipda Rural	47	43
Lake Cumberland	1	1
Lawrence	55	34
Lincoln Trail	75	69
Livingston	14	8
Madison A	54	47
Magoffin	52	31
McCracken B	103	60
McCreary	1	1
McLean	13	7
Meade	48	29
Mercer	40	28
Monroe/Cumberland	10	8
Montgomery	31	24
Muhlenberg	33	21
Nelson	69	45
Northern Kentucky	56	56
Ohio	59	35
Oldham	64	44
Pennyrile	2	2
Pulaski	67	47
Purchase	35	35
Russell	31	16
Spencer	30	19
Taylor	46	27
Trigg	32	21
Union	80	41
Wayne	29	21
Webster	15	8
Statewide	2,510	1,868



CFCRB Activity by Review Board for Fiscal Year 2012

	Paper Reviews	Children Reviewed
ADAIR	12	12
ALLEN	23	23
ANDERSON	196	91
BALLARD/CARLISLE	24	14
BARREN	144	97
BATH/MENIFEE	63	60
BELL	59	41
BOONE/GALLATIN	234	124
BOURBON	49	26
BOYD A	182	119
BOYD B	190	122
BOYLE	176	102
BREATHITT	31	18
BRECKINRIDGE	100	47
BULLITT	292	156
BUTLER	73	54
CALDWELL/LYON	14	13
CALLOWAY	160	115
CAMPBELL A	230	115
CAMPBELL B	268	157
CAMPBELL C	28	26
CAMPBELL D	21	18
CARROLL	65	23
CARTER	176	105
CASEY	11	11
CHRISTIAN	43	43
CLARK	144	71
CLAY	179	119
CLINTON	12	12
CRITTENDEN	2	2
DAVISS A	12	12
DAVISS B	156	99
EDMONSON	79	53
ELLIOTT	1	1
ESTILL	62	28
FAYETTE A	265	104
FAYETTE B	262	109
FAYETTE C	222	110
FAYETTE D	258	110
FAYETTE E	233	92
FAYETTE F	262	106
FAYETTE G	238	85
FAYETTE H	274	94
FAYETTE I	250	105
FAYETTE J	303	96
FLEMING/ROBERTSON	52	32
FLOYD	39	33
FRANKLIN	140	54
FULTON/HICKMAN	7	7
GARRARD	107	65
GRANT	111	74
GRAVES	90	54
GRAYSON	346	202
GREEN	14	14
GREENUP	131	85
HANCOCK	65	20
HARDIN A	220	123
HARDIN B	182	111
HARLAN	125	82
HARRISON/PENDLETON/NICHOLAS	112	52
HART	47	32
HENDERSON	143	77
HENRY	47	26
HOPKINS	244	133
JACKSON	16	11
JEFFERSON 1	326	146
JEFFERSON 10	326	146
JEFFERSON 2	259	104
JEFFERSON 3	321	127
JEFFERSON 4	268	122
JEFFERSON 5	45	45
JEFFERSON 6	272	105
JEFFERSON 7	11	8

	Paper Reviews	Children Reviewed
JEFFERSON 8	260	115
JEFFERSON 9	282	130
Jefferson Status IPR	3	3
JESSAMINE	81	55
JOHNSON	17	17
KENTON A	302	167
KENTON B	288	177
KENTON C	299	182
KENTON D	142	96
KENTON E	64	36
KENTON F	219	143
KENTON STATUS IPR	5	5
KNOTT	41	27
KNOX	67	59
LARUE	101	54
LAUREL 1	152	96
LAWRENCE	6	6
LEE/OWSLEY	77	50
LESLIE	41	30
LETCHER	65	44
LEWIS	29	10
LINCOLN	48	31
LIVINGSTON	6	6
LOGAN	94	65
MADISON A	147	100
MADISON B	213	97
MAGOFFIN	13	13
MARION/WASHINGTON	109	65
MARSHALL	175	109
MARTIN	137	81
MASON/BRACKEN	106	68
MCCRACKEN A	330	99
MCCRACKEN B	27	27
MCCREARY	359	149
MCLEAN	3	3
MEADE	12	12
MERCER	24	24
METCALFE	24	17
MONROE/CUMBERLAND	13	11
MONTGOMERY	11	11
MORGAN	2	2
MUHLENBERG	1	1
NELSON	16	14
OHIO	12	12
OLDHAM	10	10
OWEN	56	15
PERRY	271	149
PIKE	88	59
POWELL	119	35
PULASKI	64	63
ROCKCASTLE	103	72
ROWAN	174	105
RUSSELL	20	20
SCOTT	190	91
SHELBY	277	125
SIMPSON	67	53
SPENCER	4	4
STATUS	1	1
TAYLOR	27	27
TODD	33	24
TRIGG	13	13
TRIMBLE	90	42
UNION	9	6
WARREN A	224	144
WARREN B	196	120
WARREN C	182	107
WAYNE	32	32
WEBSTER	1	1
WHITLEY	161	98
WOLFE	23	18
WOODFORD	71	33
STATEWIDE	17,073	8,901

News & Updates

Regional Trainings offer continuing education to CFCRB volunteers

The Citizen Foster Care Review Board Regional Trainings took place across the state from Sept. 10, 2011, through Oct. 22, 2011.

The trainings provide CFCRB volunteers with the required six hours of annual continuing education. They also enhance the ability of the volunteers to conduct thorough, informed reviews and make meaningful recommendations to the court.

The specialized regional trainings included the following topics:

Reconciling Permanency Timelines with Recovery Timeframes. This session examined the delicate balance between providing necessary services for parents with substance abuse issues and a child's sense of time and need for permanency.

Poverty Perceptions and the Impact of Trauma on Children in Care. This session explored the personal and cultural perceptions regarding poverty and how each affects the role of CFCRB volunteers. It also looked at trauma from a child's perspective, including an examination of mental health, developmental needs and educational needs.

Advanced Review Techniques Built on the Basics. This interactive session focused on how to conduct effective paper and interested party reviews. It addressed frequently asked questions, audit issues and best practices in findings and recommendations.

During the 2011 CFCRB Regional Trainings, seven volunteers received the Outstanding Volunteer Award, three judges were given

Outstanding Judge Awards and one guardian ad litem was recognized for service to children.

The CFCRB State Board held its annual meeting in November 2011. The meeting included a training session on trauma and the impact of trauma on status offenders and cross-over youth.

Jefferson County Family Court Judge Joan Byer gave a presentation on issues related to child traumatic stress and its impact on human development across the lifespan. She also illustrated the connection between child traumatic stress and the risk of juvenile delinquency.

Interested Party Review becomes standard review process in 44 counties

Interested Party Review is an interactive review process that focuses on case plans for the parents and their child and the progress being made to secure permanency for the child.

The IPR involves Citizen Foster Care Review Board volunteers, parents, care providers, service providers, Department for Community Based Services personnel, Court Appointed Special Advocate volunteers and attorneys for children and parents. Upon completion of the mandatory review, a family services coordinator compiles a comprehensive report of findings and recommendations. The report is submitted to the judge responsible for case review.

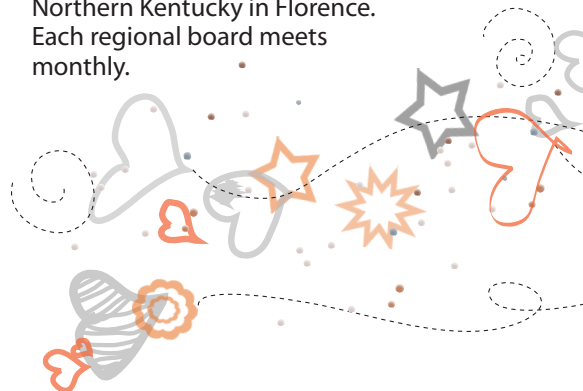
CFCRB volunteers conducted 2,510 of these intensive reviews during Fiscal Year 2012, which was a 19 percent increase over FY 2011. There were 1,868 children receiving an IPR in FY 2012, which was a 15 percent increase over FY 2011.

The number of review boards that use IPR as the standard for reviewing all cases continues to grow. Forty-two boards representing 44 counties now use IPR. In FY 2012, 29 percent of the local boards used IPR as the standard for reviewing all cases, compared with 24 percent in FY 2011, 18 percent in FY 2010, 16 percent in FY 2009 and 1.4 percent in FY 2008.

The boards that conduct their reviews using the IPR process are Adair, Allen, Bullitt B, Caldwell/Lyon, Casey, Christian, Clinton, Crittenden, Daviess A, Elliott/Morgan, Fayette Status, Floyd, Fulton/Hickman, Garrard, Green, Jefferson 5, Jefferson 7, Jefferson Status, Johnson, Kenton Status, Lawrence, Livingston, Madison A, Magoffin, McCracken B, McLean, Meade, Mercer, Monroe/Cumberland, Montgomery, Muhlenberg, Nelson, Ohio, Oldham, Pulaski, Russell, Spencer, Taylor, Trigg, Union, Wayne and Webster.

In addition, regional IPR boards are in place for counties that do not have a local IPR board. Cases are pulled from the counties served by each region, which makes the IPR process available to children on a statewide basis.

The regional IPR boards operating statewide are Barren River in Bowling Green, Bluegrass Rural in Lexington, Cumberland Valley in London, Fayette in Lexington, FIVCO in Ashland, Gateway/Bufalo Trace in Morehead, Jefferson in Louisville, Kentucky River in Hazard, KIPDA Rural in Shelbyville and Northern Kentucky in Florence. Each regional board meets monthly.



CATS database improves reporting on children in out-of-home care

The Children's Automated Tracking System – CATS – provides case information on children in out-of-home care for the Administrative Office of the Courts, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, the Department for Community Based Services and judges.

The CFCRB also uses the database to fulfill its statutory requirement for reporting on children in out-of-home care to the Supreme Court of Kentucky, the governor and the Legislative Research Commission.

Information from CATS determines which aspects of the dependency, neglect and abuse proceedings need improvement, including the termination of parental rights, permanency hearings and

placement stability. The system also ensures that the case of every child in state custody is reviewed in a timely manner by the CFCRB. CATS data stays current through a weekly download of information from TWIST – The Worker Information System – which is maintained by the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. AOC staff can directly access TWIST and view information on any child in the Department for Community Based Services system.

CATS does the following:

- Houses all reviews completed by the CFCRB.
- Sends automated reminders for case reviews.
- Tracks key court dates including adjudications, dispositions and permanency reviews.

- Tracks training hours for CFCRB volunteers.
- Tracks names and addresses of parties relevant to cases, including guardians ad litem, social workers, supervisors and judges.
- Tracks parties who receive notification of an interested party review.

CATS also collects names of children who are statutorily eligible for review. The AOC provides that list electronically to DCBS case workers.

The timely, detailed information available from CATS has given judges and child advocates the ability to improve the outcomes of children in foster care.

Court Improvement Program enhances work of the CFCRB

The federally funded Kentucky Court Improvement Program supports the Citizen Foster Care Review Boards with enhanced education, the Children's Automated Tracking System and the Interested Party Review Program.

CIP grant funds provide resources and technical assistance to promote innovation in court practices, ensure due process for all parties and timely decision-making in family law cases, and help communities more successfully meet the needs of Kentucky's children.

The CIP mission aligns with the federal Child and Family Services reviews by promoting the following:

Safety

- Children are first and foremost protected from abuse and neglect.
- Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.

Permanency

- Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.

- The continuity of family relations and connections is preserved for families.

Well-Being

- Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.
- Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.
- Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

The CIP has developed these initiatives to promote the safety, permanency and well-being of children in foster care:

- Implement Best Practices/ Model Court sites.
- Revise Family Court Rules of Procedure and Practice.
- Continue the Court Improvement Program Task Force/Advisory Board.
- Ongoing collaboration and data sharing between the Cabinet for Health and Family Services and the CFCRB.
- Continued improvements to the Children's Automated Tracking System.



Children's Advocacy Day prompts legislation to promote child welfare

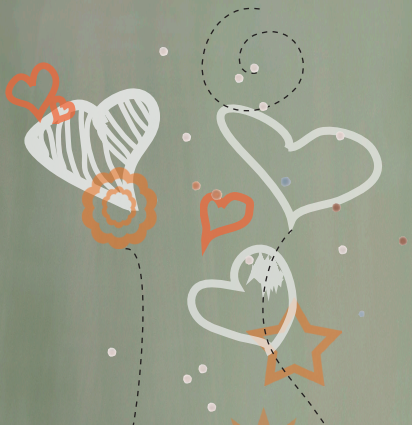
Children's Advocacy Day was held on Feb. 16, 2012, at the Capitol in Frankfort.

This event began in 2004 as an effort to unite advocates throughout Kentucky to raise their voices together on behalf the safety, health, education and economic well-being of children and families.

It provides an opportunity for hundreds of advocates from across the state to bring children's needs and solutions to state legislators. The Kentucky Citizen Foster Care Review Board was one of the sponsors of the event. In addition, CFCRB volunteers participated in the event and met with state legislators during Children's Advocacy Day.

Thanks to the efforts of these volunteers, the CFCRB legislation was introduced to the House Judiciary Committee as House Bill 242. The legislation focused on giving the Cabinet access to the Department of Education's electronic portal as a way to enhance the educational records of foster children. The Cabinet for Health and Family Services maintains those case files.

Although the bill did not make it out of committee, it was considered an achievement that the legislation was introduced as a bill.



Supreme Court approves Local Rules and amends Family Court Rules of Procedure and Practice

In January 2011, the Supreme Court of Kentucky adopted the first uniform rules for family law cases statewide. The Family Court Rules of Procedure and Practice – FCRPP – apply to all family law cases. Family law cases include such matters as divorce, termination of parental rights, domestic violence, child support, juvenile status offenses, adoption, and dependency, neglect or abuse.

Prior to the adoption of the FCRPP, there were no statewide rules specifically for family law cases. Judges followed the Supreme Court Civil Rules and created local family law rules for their jurisdiction.

The FCRPP have had a significant impact on the practice of family law in Kentucky, including a requirement that all local rules of court be reviewed and revised to comply with the statewide FCRPP.

In May 2011, a Local Rules Seminar was held to allow family law judges and circuit court clerks to draft new local rules in compliance with case law and the FCRPP. As a result of the seminar, judges across the state submitted revised local rules, which were carefully reviewed and approved by the Supreme Court.

The process began in 2009 when Deputy Chief Justice Mary C. Noble headed the initiative to develop and recommend uniform rules as chair of the Supreme Court Civil Rules Committee. The Family Court Rules are a section of the Civil Rules and the Supreme Court created the new Committee on Family Court Rules, with Justice Noble as chair.

Based on comments by judges, circuit clerks, state agencies and the Bar, and after the new rules were applied to the family law dockets for more than a year, Justice Noble opened the FCRPP up for amendments in 2012. In February 2012, a committee of the original judges co-chairing the

Civil Rules Initiative Committees, as well as other interested judges, were invited to review more than 40 pages of comments and recommendations relating to the new rules. Their recommendations were submitted to the newly formed Supreme Court Committee on Family Court Rules in March 2012 and amendments were vetted through that committee as well.

The recommendations for the amendments were distributed to attorneys statewide through an article in the May 2012 issue of Bench & Bar, the Kentucky Bar Association magazine. Attorneys had the opportunity to provide input on the proposed rules at a hearing during the KBA Convention in June 2012. In October 2012, the proposed amendments and attorney comments were presented to the Supreme Court, which voted to adopt the rules.

The FCRPP and the 2012 amendments are based on best practices in domestic and child welfare cases in Kentucky courts. This is the first time Kentucky has provided a uniform set of rules for judges, attorneys and parties to follow statewide to help ensure the safety, permanency and well-being of children and families.

The FCRPP and its amendments also support Kentucky's Court Improvement Program and its Program Improvement Plan in response to the federal Child and Family Services Review. It includes measures mandated by the Adoption and Safe Families Act and Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act and identified as issues related specifically to the court. These include timely annual permanency reviews, notice and opportunity to be heard for foster parents, pre-adoptive parents and relative caregivers, and ensuring orders are properly signed and entered. The amended rules were effective January 1, 2013.

Note: Domestic and child welfare cases are handled by Family Court judges in the 71 Kentucky counties with a Family Court. In the 49 other counties, the cases are handled by circuit and district judges.

Amendments to the Family Court Rules of Procedure and Practice

Amendments to the Family Court Rules of Procedure and Practice will affect dependency, neglect and abuse actions, as well as adoptions and termination of parental rights. They include:

FCRPP 17 was revised to ensure that Notice and an Opportunity to be Heard must be given to any foster parent, pre-adoptive parent or relative caregiver prior to any review or permanency hearing. The state child welfare agency is required to inform the court of the name and address of the foster parent(s), pre-adoptive parent(s) or relative caregiver(s). The clerk shall then provide notice of any review to all parties and any foster parent, pre-adoptive parent or relative caregiver; and, the court shall give them an opportunity to be heard at the hearing. The rule specifies that these people shall not be designated as a party to the proceeding solely on the basis of such notice and right to be heard.

FCRPP 18 now includes a commentary (which is not a rule but acts as guidance) which states that if a permanent custody motion is filed in a dependency, neglect and abuse (DNA) action under KRS 620.027, the movant shall insure personal service of the motion upon both parents.

FCRPP 22(5) clarifies that no order in a DNA action may be entered on verbal approval or a stamped signature (The rule previously only specified this relative to the ECO.) There is also a commentary that specifies that faxed, scanned original signatures and encrypted or otherwise secure electronic

signatures are authorized when approved by the Supreme Court.

FCRPP 23 now clarifies that a continuance of the annual permanency review (APR) is not allowed for any cause. A commentary is also included that specifies the federal code provision that disallows a continuance of the APR for any cause beyond 12 months.

FCRPP 26 was clarified to provide that any appointed GAL or parent's attorney is not required to file a separate written entry of appearance.

FCRPP 29 requires the state child welfare agency to provide the names and addresses of the child's foster parent(s), pre-adoptive parent(s) or relative caregiver(s) to the court with the case plan and case progress reports.

FCRPP 30 was amended to provide for a separate independent living review for any child who will age out of care at least six months before they turn 18 to determine if they have had training on independent living and other services.

FCRPP 32 was revised to ensure that separate petitions are to be filed regarding each child in not only DNA cases, but also in adoption and termination of parental rights cases.

FCRPP 33 and 34 were amended to again clarify that the APR in any underlying DNA case cannot be continued beyond 12 months from entry into foster care regardless of cause.

FCRPP 36 was revised to clarify that the post-TPR review occurs in the underlying DNA case 90 days following entry of the order terminating parental rights. The rule is now specific about the mechanics of how the order shall be certified to the record and docketed by the clerk.

Best Practices/Model Court Initiative expands into 4 new counties

Four new counties became sites for the Best Practices/Model Court Initiative in Fiscal Year 2012.

The program is being led by Family Court Judge Susan McClure in Hopkins County, District Judge Shan Embry in Grayson County and Family Court Judges Lisa Bushelman and Christopher Mehling in Kenton County. Family Court Judge Janie Wells has begun implementing a Model Court in Johnson County.

Seven counties – Jefferson, Fayette, Daviess, Hardin, Boyle/Mercer and Jessamine – have ongoing Best Practices/ Model Court programs.

The Model Court initiative calls for the courts to work with community partners to address issues that will improve the outcomes for abused and neglected children and their families. These courts are using the best practices proposed by the Model Courts Project of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges as an innovative way to improve court proceedings involving the mistreatment of children.

The Department of Family and Juvenile Services of the Administrative Office of the Courts oversees the Best Practices/Model Court Initiative. Family services coordinators share resources and technical assistance to help family law judges and court partners identify and overcome barriers to safety, timeliness, permanency and due process. They also help local communities deliver services to children in foster care.



AOC Family Services Coordinators

Area 1

Counties: Ballard, Caldwell, Calloway, Carlisle, Christian, Crittenden, Fulton, Graves, Hickman, Hopkins, Livingston, Lyon, Marshall, McCracken, Trigg

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Fax 270-388-5410
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Area 2

Counties: Butler, Daviess, Hancock, Henderson, Logan, McLean, Muhlenberg, Ohio, Todd, Union, Webster

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Ohio County Community Center
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Fax 270-298-7240
Position Vacant

Area 3

Counties: Allen, Barren, Breckinridge, Cumberland, Edmonson, Grayson, Hart, Meade, Metcalfe, Monroe, Simpson, Warren

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Counties: Anderson, Carroll, Franklin, Hardin, Henry, Nelson, Oldham, Owen, Scott, Shelby, Spencer, Woodford

Amy Smitha

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Counties: Bath, Boyd, Carter, Elliott, Fleming, Greenup, Lawrence, Lewis, Menifee, Montgomery, Morgan, Powell, Robertson, Rowan

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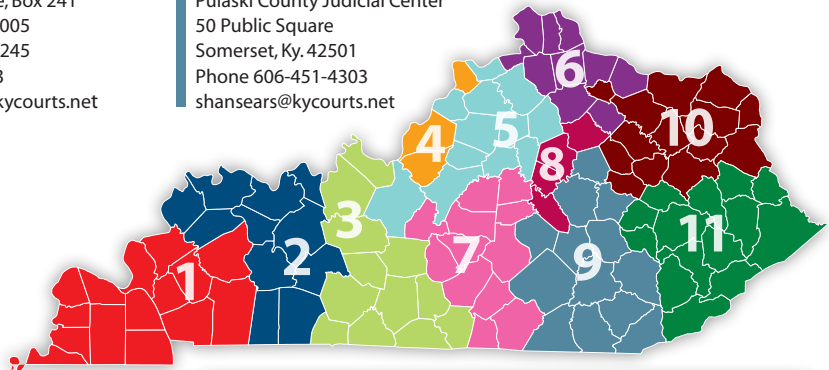
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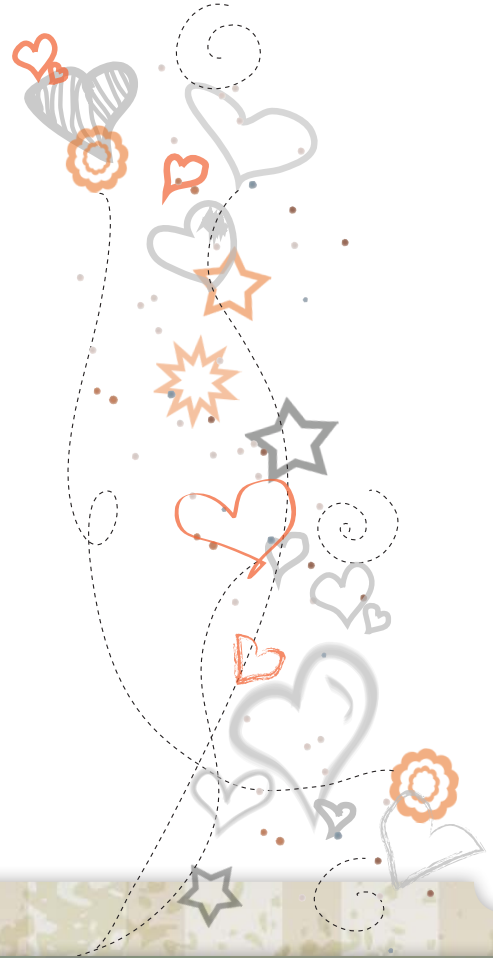
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